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Letter dated 24 April 2015 from the Permanent Representative of Qatar to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit to you a letter dated 23 April 2015 from the representative of the National Coalition of Syrian Revolution and Opposition Forces (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Alya Ahmed Ś. **Al-Thani**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 24 April 2015 from the Permanent Representative of Qatar to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

On behalf of the Syrian people and the National Coalition of Syrian Revolution and Opposition Forces, it is with great alarm that I draw your attention to the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Syria. The repeated and systematic use of chemical weapons, ballistic missiles, barrel bombs, torture and siege tactics against Syrian civilians, including women and children, demands immediate and decisive Security Council action, including through the authorization of a no-fly zone.

Since the Security Council last heard from the Under-Secretary-General and the Emergency Relief Coordinator on the humanitarian situation in Syria, the violence perpetrated by Syrian regime forces and the terrorist extremist group Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) has escalated sharply. On 1 April 2015, after besieging the Palestinian refugee camp of Yarmouk for two years, regime forces facilitated ISIL infiltration of the camp, where it continued to terrorize the civilian population.

In Idlib, Syrian regime forces repeatedly used the chemical weapon chlorine gas to terrorize the civilian population, including on 16 April 2015, when regime helicopters launched double chemical aerial strikes on the villages of Sarmin and Korin, in direct violation of Security Council resolutions 2118 (2013) and 2209 (2015). The attacks in Idlib in April followed a month of repeated chlorine gas attacks by Syrian regime air forces, which resulted in no less than 206 victims. But chemical weapons were only one of the tools that Syrian regime forces used to terrorize and kill innocent civilians by air.

Across opposition-held areas in Idlib, Aleppo, Moadamiyeh, Dar'a, Homs and Rif Dimashq, Syrian regime forces used indiscriminate aerial bombings to kill, injure and maim civilians, and to destroy homes and civilian infrastructure. As Assad's forces withdrew to positions south of Idlib city, the regime launched surface-to-surface rockets and aerial attacks, including barrel bombs that damaged more than 350 structures. Aerial bombings in Sarmin, Mantaf and Nayrab between 29 and 31 March resulted in the deaths of 49 civilians, while a barrel bomb attack in Aleppo city on 6 March resulted in the deaths of at least 20 civilians. Rif Dimashq also continued to be a site of heavy regime shelling and aerial bombardment. On 10 March, air strikes near a primary school in Deir al-Asafeer resulted in 2 civilian deaths and 50 injured, including many children. Air strikes on 14 and 15 March on civilian areas in Naoura Garden and Masaken killed 38 civilians and injured 147 others. These actions violated Security Council resolutions 2139 (2014), 2165 (2014) and 2191 (2014), as outlined in annex I.

The Syrian Coalition condemns the atrocities committed by the Syrian regime, and we condemn the atrocities committed by terrorist extremist groups. Both must be stopped. Both must be held accountable. Both are also interlinked.

The Syrian regime's brutal oppression of a democratic uprising and its systematic destruction of civilian life and infrastructure has generated instability and chaos across Syria and made it a safe haven for extremist terrorist groups. Using Syria as a base from which to launch attacks and build resources, ISIL now allegedly has affiliates in various countries throughout the world. It recruits actively

from Europe, North America, the Middle East and Africa and represents a direct threat to the safety and interests of all nations represented on the Security Council.

All peoples have a stake in stopping ISIL and ending its brutality, but no one has a greater stake in stopping ISIL than the Syrian people. That is why, for the past 12 months the Free Syrian Army has served as the front line on terror in Syria, waging a two-front war against both ISIL and Assad. Tragically, however, the moderate majority of Syria will not win the war against terror and tyranny in the absence of international support. That is why I am appealing to the Security Council to adopt a comprehensive approach to the crisis in Syria that tackles both ISIL and its root cause: the Assad regime.

In particular, the Syrian Coalition calls on the Security Council to:

(i) Protect civilians by authorizing a no-fly zone. Indiscriminate aerial bombardment is the principal cause of civilian deaths in Syria. A no-fly zone would put an immediate halt to such suffering, reducing the rate of the death toll by as much as 30 per cent. It would create the conditions needed to establish a safe zone and enable Syria's displaced people to begin the process of return;

(ii) Demand United Nations access to Syria's besieged areas, with or without regime consent. The United Nations estimates that 440,000 Syrians are currently living in besieged areas. According to the Secretary-General, roughly half of those are besieged by regime forces and the other half by terrorist extremist groups. The Security Council should demand free access to all besieged areas, so that food, water and urgently needed medical care can reach all those who need it;

(iii) Increase humanitarian commitments to the Syrian people. On 31 March, the Third International Pledging Conference for Syria took place in Kuwait City. While donor States contributed generously, the United Nations is still only halfway towards meeting its goal of raising $8.4 billion to help the people of Syria. On behalf of my people, I ask that members of the Council increase their pledges to the United Nations and to non-governmental organizations working to deliver aid to innocent civilians;

(iv) Ensure accountability by referring the situation in Syria to the International Criminal Court (ICC). Syrian regime forces and terrorist extremist groups like ISIL continue to commit war crimes and crimes against humanity with impunity. An ICC referral would end impunity, deter further atrocities and bring justice to victims.

The actions proposed above will save lives in Syria. They will also begin to get a grip of the situation, potentially laying the foundation for a much-needed political solution to the crisis. Through the concerted actions of a united Security Council, this institution can help to restore peace and stability to Syria. If, however, the Council fails to find the consensus needed, I urge Member States to employ the measures necessary to stop the bloodbath in Syria and provide the protection our people so desperately require.

(*Signed*) Najib **Ghadbian**
Special Representative to the United Nations
National Coalition of Syrian Revolution and Opposition Forces

Enclosure

Syrian regime non-compliance with Security Council resolution 2139 (2014)

(i) Operative paragraph 3: All parties immediately cease attacks against civilians and the indiscriminate employment of weapons in populated areas.

Violation: Syrian regime's indiscriminate use of aerial weapons and barrel bombs

In the past six months, the Syrian regime conducted more than 13,084 air raids, using warplanes and explosive barrel bombs. Helicopters dropped more than 7,188 barrel bombs on areas throughout Rif Dimashq, Aleppo, Homs, Hama, Hasakeh, Deir ez-Zor, Quneitra, Dar`a, Idlib and Ladhiqiyah. Warplanes conducted at least 5,896 raids on the governorates of Damascus, Rif Dimashq, Aleppo, Homs, Hama, Hasakeh, Deir ez-Zor, Raqqa, Quneitra, Dar`a, Idlib and Ladhiqiyah. These indiscriminate aerial attacks resulted in the deaths of 2,312 civilians, including 376 women and 529 children.

Among the aerial attacks conducted throughout the month of April were the following:

22 April: 19 air strikes by warplanes were deployed in Rif Dimahsq governorate in the areas of Zabdin, Harasta, Bala and Deir al-Asafeer. These attacks resulted in the deaths of 9 civilians, including 2 women.

21 April: In Ma`arat al-Nu`maan and Kafr Nabl barrel bombs were deployed on civilian occupied areas, resulting in 20 killed, including 6 civilians.

20 April: In Dar`a governorate regime forces deployed barrel bombs on Sheikh Meskin, Inkhel, Na'ema, Mzereb, Mal and Tariq al-Sad.

19 April: In Hama governorate, Syrian regime helicopters dropped barrel bombs on Sat Heyyat, Allatamnah, Kafr Zita and the village of Sayyad. In Rif Dimashq governorate, 10 barrel bombs were deployed on Zabdani, while warplanes raided Kafr Batna in eastern Ghouta.

18 April: In the city of Idlib, Syrian regime helicopters dropped 6 barrel bombs, while warplanes carried out a raid on the village of Talhiyyah in northern Idlib, resulting in 3 deaths, including 1 child. In Ladhiqiyah, helicopters dropped 12 barrel bombs on the villages of Akrad Mountain.

17 April: 6 air strikes were reported near Arabean mount, in Idlib governorate, while 4 explosive barrel bombs fell on Ma`arat al-Nu`maan and Khan Shekhon. Warplanes raided Taoum, Taftanaz, Idlib city, Ein al-Bara, Ein al-Soda and Talheia, in addition to carrying out 5 air strikes on Felon town, west of Idlib.

15 April: Regime warplanes delivered 60 air strikes against Sahen, Jedraia, Samlin, Bara, Felon, Senjar, Bazabor, Mastuma, Nerab, Benech, Arbaen mount, Idlib and Abo al-Dohor military airport, while regime helicopters dropped 63 barrel bombs on Ein al-Soda, Saraqib, Iblin, Ehsim, Kobin, Hebet, Basamis, Abdin, Nabi Ayoub, Kafar Najd, Taoum, Taftanaz, Khan Shekhon and Mertin. These attacks resulted in the deaths of 38 civilians, including 9 children and 10 women.

14 April: In Aleppo governorate barrel bombs fell on the residential neighbourhoods of Hanano and Ashrafya, while the areas of Rasm al-Aboud, Kafar Hamra and

Sharba were exposed to aerial bombardment, resulting in the death of a father and the injury of 5 of his children. In Dar`a governorate explosive barrels were dropped on Zamrin, eastern Karak, Saida and Inkhel, leading to the deaths of 3 children in eastern Karak.

12 April: In Aleppo governorate, 9 civilians were killed after regime air strikes hit the Jamil Qabani school in Ansari neighbourhood. Aerial bombardment also resulted in the death of 1 child in the Shekh Kheder neighbourhood, while regime warplanes targeted the Bayada and Hanano residential neighbourhoods.

11 April: In Homs governorate, Syrian regime helicopters dropped barrel bombs on locations in Ez al-Din and Deir.

9 April: In Damascus governorate, helicopters dropped 6 barrel bombs on the Yarmouk refugee camp. In Deir ez-Zor governorate, regime warplanes raided an airbase and a nearby oil well in Khasham Desert.

8 April: In Idlib governorate, regime warplanes conducted 7 air strikes in Idlib city, including with barrel bombs. One man and 1 woman were killed by aerial bombardment in Sarmin town, while barrel bombs hit Taman'a, Skek and Saraqib.

7 April: In Dar`a, the neighbourhood Tariq al-Sad in the town of Zamrin was targeted with barrel bombs. In Quneitra governorate, regime helicopters dropped barrel bombs on the towns of MasHara and Om Batenah.

6 April: 21 barrel bombs fell on Zamrin and Samlin in Dar`a governorate, while aerial weapons also targeted Om al-Osaj, Inkhel, Kfar Shams and Zamrin.

5 April: In Idlib governorate, warplanes raided the town of Saraqeb, while simultaneous raids were targeted against the village of Sarjah in Zaweyi Mountain. Regime helicopters dropped 2 barrel bombs on the town of Tah in southern Idlib. Eleven people were also killed as a result of the aerial bombardment of the city of Salqin and the town of Kafar Takharim. In Damascus governorate, helicopters dropped 13 explosive barrels on areas in the Yarmouk refugee camp. Two civilians were killed by aerial bombardment in Jobar.

4 April: In Damascus governorate, warplanes raided Jobar neighbourhood, while in Dar`a governorate a woman was killed after barrel bombs fell on the town. Barrel bombs also fell on Gharia, Harra hill, Sheikh Meskin and Jasim.

2 April: In Rif Dimashq governorate, Syrian regime helicopters dropped 12 explosive barrels on Magher village in the western countryside of Damascus and 8 on Zabdani.

1 April: In Dar`a governorate, warplanes raided the towns of Nasib, Om al-Mayazen and Tayba, while helicopters dropped 9 barrel bombs on Ibtaa and Sheikh Meskin.

Violation: Syrian regime's use of chlorine gas

16 April: Chlorine gas attacks were launched in the villages of Sermin and Korin in Idlib governorate. Gas canisters were among the barrel bomb remnants found at the impact sites. At least 20 victims suffered from suffocation and were taken to field hospitals for immediate treatment. Among those injured were civilians, including a mother and her children.

31 March: 2 chlorine-filled barrel bombs were dropped on the city of Idlib, resulting in 27 injuries.

30 March: 2 barrel bombs loaded with chlorine gas were dropped on the city of Idlib's Mehrab roundabout and the area of Matahen, resulting in six injuries.

26 March: A helicopter dropped a barrel bomb filled with chlorine gas on the west side of Sarmin; 5 people were treated for severe chemical exposure, including a seven-year-old girl. Dozens more were injured.

24 March: 6 barrel bombs were dropped in Binnish, forcing more than 30 people to receive medical treatment. Among the injured were women, children and elderly people.

23 March: 2 barrel bombs were dropped on the village of Qminas, forcing at least 20 people to seek treatment for exposure to chlorine gas.

16 March: 2 chlorine-filled barrel bombs were dropped on Sarmin, resulting in 7 deaths, including a husband and wife and their three children and the children's grandmother. That same day, the village of Qminas was hit by 2 chlorine-filled barrel bombs.

(ii) Operative paragraphs 8 and 10: All parties must immediately cease attacks against medical facilities and other civilian objects, as well as medical personnel, and prioritize the fullest possible medical attention for those in need.

Violation: Syrian regime attacks on medical facilities and medical staff

The Syrian regime continues to impede World Health Organization shipments of medical assistance to the besieged towns of Douma, in eastern Ghouta and Madaya, in Rif Dimashq. Regime forces launched 8 attacks on medical facilities, including in Idlib, Dar`a, Deir ez-Zor and Hama governorates, using missiles, rockets and barrel bombs. Two medical personnel were tortured to death by regime forces.

(iii) Operative paragraphs 5, 6 and 7: All parties must immediately lift sieges of populated areas and allow unrestricted delivery of humanitarian aid. All parties must promptly allow United Nations humanitarian agencies and partners safe and unhindered access to populations in need.

Violation: The Syrian regime continues to besiege civilian communities

167,500 people remain besieged by Syrian regime forces in eastern Ghouta and Darayya. In eastern Ghouta, 163,500 people continue to be denied access to food, water and medical care. In Darayya, Rif Dimashq, 4,000 people are besieged by regime forces and denied urgently needed United Nations assistance.